

GER 370 – The History of German Cinema

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Syllabus

Course Information

Instructor Information

See the online course in Blackboard for instructor contact information and availability.

Textbook and Course Materials

Required Materials

1. You will need to purchase the book *German Culture through Film: An Introduction of German Cinema* Second Edition by Robert Reimer, Reinhard Zachau, and Margit Sinka. ISBN: 9781585108565. Be sure to purchase the SECOND EDITION of the text since many of the readings you will need are not included in the first edition.

Contact the [Scribner Bookstore](#) for ordering information.

2. You will need to find the following articles from the following scholarly journals, available on scholarly databases (such as J-STOR):

Bernstein, Matthew H., "The Lives of Others: On a Story of Surveillance, Betrayal, Tragedy, and Redemption," in *Film Quarterly*, Volume 61, Number 1, Fall 2007

Vila, Xavier and Alice Kuzniar, "Witnessing Narration in *Wings of Desire*," in *Film Criticism*, Volume 16, Number 3, Spring 1992

Whalen, Tom, "Run Lola Run," in *Film Quarterly*, Volume 53, Number 3, Spring 2000

3. **It is your responsibility to find your own copies or streaming access to view the following films.** As these films are classics, they are not difficult to find. Find, of course, the versions with English subtitles! (*Metropolis* is a silent film).

- *Metropolis* (Fritz Lang, 1927) (preferably the Giorgio Moroder version)
- *The Blue Angel* (Josef von Sternberg, 1930)
- *Triumph of the Will* (Leni Riefenstahl, 1938) (preferably the version with audio commentary by Dr. Anthony Santoro)
- *The Tin Drum* (Volker Schlöndorff, 1979)
- *Wings of Desire* (Wim Wenders, 1987)
- *Run, Lola, Run* (Tom Tykwer, 1998)
- *The Lives of Others* (Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, 2006)

Course Description

In this course we will be exploring the history of German Cinema from its early days during the Weimar Republic (Germany between the two World Wars) to the present day. Attention will be given to the social, political, and cultural aspects of Germany as related through selected German films.

Credit Hours

4

Prerequisites and/or Co-requisites

None

Learning Outcomes

Students who successfully complete this course will be able to:

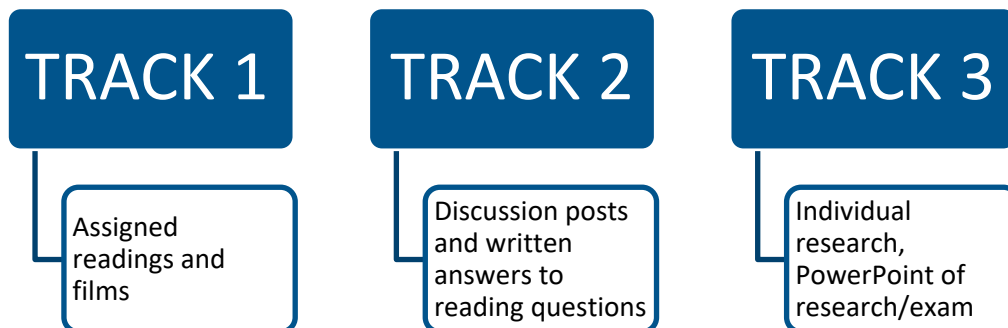
1. Describe the development of German Cinema from its early stages to present day.
2. Explain the social, political, and cultural aspects of Germany as related through film.
3. Articulate major themes in the films studied as they apply to their time in history.
4. Discuss how the filmmakers use cinematic techniques, such as lighting, color, and sound, to enhance their message.

Course Format and Design

This course is offered fully online in modular format. The course is designed to provide students with a variety of learning experiences and equip students with learning resources and activities that enable learning outcomes.

Owing to the variety of activities which we will undertake, it may be helpful to think of the course as proceeding on three tracks, as follows:

- **Track One:** assigned readings and films
- **Track Two:** discussion posts and written answers to reading questions
- **Track Three:** individual research, PowerPoint of research/exam



University Information and Policies

University Mission Statement

Prepare each student for a meaningful life and career

The mission of Virginia Wesleyan University is to engage students of diverse ages, religions, ethnic origins, and backgrounds in a rigorous liberal arts education that will prepare them to meet the challenges of life and career in a complex and rapidly changing world. In this endeavor, the university employs a wide range of approaches to teaching and learning and provides opportunities to connect the study of the liberal arts with practical learning experiences on campus, in the Hampton Roads region, and throughout the world. In accord with our United Methodist heritage, Virginia Wesleyan aspires to be a supportive community that is committed to social responsibility, ethical conduct, higher learning, and religious freedom.

Special Needs and Accommodations

Virginia Wesleyan University is committed to giving all students the opportunity of academic success. If you are a student who is requesting accommodations based on the academic impact of a disability, speak to your instructor about your accommodations letter and specific needs. If you do not have an accommodations letter for this course, you will need to visit or call for an appointment with a disability support specialist to coordinate reasonable accommodations. Visit [Virginia Wesleyan University Disability Support Services](#) on the Web.

Honor Code

As a liberal arts university, Virginia Wesleyan is committed to values of citizenship and social responsibility fundamental to a community of scholars. People who join this academic community agree to maintain academic honesty and, therefore, not to cheat, lie, falsify data, or commit plagiarism or academic theft. Refer to the [Virginia Wesleyan Honor Code](#) for definitions, rights, responsibilities, and procedures.

Student Handbook

All students are expected to uphold the university's mission statement and abide by the university's honor code, the Virginia Wesleyan Creed, and all other standards that govern the conduct and behavior of students. For more information, refer to the [student handbook](#).

Technology Requirements

Online courses require that you have access to a computer with a reliable Internet connection (high-speed access recommended). A backup plan is recommended in the event of an Internet outage.

You will need to have access to and be able to use the following:

- A Web browser (Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox is recommended.)
- Adobe Acrobat Reader ([Get Adobe Acrobat Reader free.](#))
- Microsoft Office 365 ([Get Office 365 free.](#))
- A Virginia Wesleyan e-mail account
- [Power Point]

For assistance with passwords and user IDs, contact the [Virginia Wesleyan Help Desk.](#)

For assistance with Blackboard, please contact [the Help Center.](#)

Instructional Technology

For information, support, and training in the academic software of the university, refer to the university's department of [Instructional Technology.](#)

Learning Center

Contact the [Learning Center](#) for the following services:

- Academic advocacy and communication
- Academic planning and workshops
- Academic tutoring
- Computers and assistive technology
- Disability support services
- Individualized writing assistance
- Speech lab

Hofheimer Library

The Hofheimer Library supports the Virginia Wesleyan community by providing services, resources, and facilities that advance the academic program. Visit the [Hofheimer Library](#) on the Web for information, resources, services, and hours.

Nondiscrimination Statement

Virginia Wesleyan University does not discriminate against students of any race, religion, color, creed, gender, national and ethnic origin, age, marital status, covered veteran status, handicap, sexual orientation, or any other legally protected status in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other university-administered programs and facilities.

Diversity Statement

Virginia Wesleyan University values the benefits of its diversity. We are committed to educating the campus community about issues of diversity. The campus promotes freedom of thought and opinion in the spirit of mutual respect. Our campus community is

enriched through programs, activities, and interactions by celebrating our uniqueness as well as our commonalities.

This commitment to diversity links programs and services that support the distinctiveness of individuals regardless of racial and ethnic backgrounds, physical and cognitive abilities, family status, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, age, and religious and spiritual values.

An essential feature of this community is an environment in which all students, faculty, administrators, and staff are able to study and work free from bias and harassment. Such an environment contributes to the growth and development of each member of the community.

Course Policies

Participation

Students are expected to log into the course at least every 2-3 days with submissions required 3 times per week. Regular course participation is expected, especially for discussion board postings. It is difficult to catch up if you get behind, so please be in the regular habit of logging into the course and working on the course materials.

Late Work

No late posts will be accepted on the discussion board.

Written assignments will only be accepted 24 hours from the original due date and will lose points (up to half-credit).

Written assignments must be in Word Document form (no Google docs).

Make-up Work

There will be no make-up work given for the course. If you have extenuating circumstances which are interfering with your academic performance, you should contact your academic advisor to drop the course.

Extra Credit

There is no extra credit for this course.

Netiquette Guide

Just as in a face to face course, you are expected to act in an appropriate and professional manner toward both your instructor and your classmates. You are to be considerate and respectful of each other's ideas and you are to treat one another with common courtesy.

Strategies for Success

The key to success in this course is to not fall behind in your weekly assignments. Begin by reading the Reimer reading assignments and screening the film. Then answer the written questions. Do not wait until the second post to start working on the next film. Try to work ahead.

Course Grades and Assignments

Grade Allocation

Assignment	Percentage Value
Weekly Discussions	25%
Weekly Written Assignments	20%
Research Paper	20%
Final Exam	20%
PowerPoint Presentation	15%
Total	100%

Grading Scale

A	93–100
A-	90–92
B+	88–89
B	83–87
B-	80–82
C+	78–79
C	73–77
C-	70–72
D+	68–69
D	63–67
D-	60–62
F	Below 60

Assignment Descriptions

All assignments are due the day they appear on the Course Schedule.

Discussion Board (25%)

Two discussion board posts are required each week, including an initial post, due by 11:59 a.m. on days 2 (or as assigned) and a reply to other students' posts. Posts must be at least six full sentences in length. In your initial post, you will be asked to respond to specific questions

related to the film we are studying that week. You will need to have screened the film before you can post.

Weekly Written Assignments (20%)

Each week you will answer the questions as assigned from *German Culture Through Film*. (The book is referred to as Reimer on the course schedule.) Each answer to each question should be one full paragraph in length minimum. You will submit these written assignments through SafeAssign. Assignments are due by 11:59 p.m. ET on the day they appear on the calendar. The student's one lowest homework grade will be dropped.

Final Exam (20%)

Your final exam will be an essay exam due in the last module of the course. You will be asked to synthesize concepts from throughout the term. You will submit your exam through SafeAssign.

Research Paper (20%)

You will write a research paper of approximately 5 to 7 pages in length. You will write on one topic in one film. You will select a topic, with instructor approval, and investigate this topic during the term with academic sources to support it. In week 5, you will write a 1- to 2-paragraph description of the proposed topic, plus 3 to 5 academic sources. In Week 6, you may submit a rough draft of the paper. In week 7, you will submit the final version of your paper using SafeAssign. You must have a clear thesis and relevant points from the film and scholarly sources to back it up. Papers must conform to the MLA style.

Recommended Topics for your research paper are:

- The Portrayal of Germany's Role in WWII
- Communism
- The Two Germanys
- Materialism
- Nationalism
- Class Relations
- Denazification
- Representations of Women
- Representations of Non-Germans in Germany
- The Transition of an Authoritarian Regime to a Liberal Democracy
- Historical Archetypes in German Cinema
- The Economic Miracle
- Other?

PowerPoint Presentation (15%)

In week 7 you will submit a 10-slide power point presentation, presenting the findings in your research paper. You must include: your thesis, your best point to back up your thesis, a visual of some kind from or about the film/topic, your conclusion, your sources. You will submit your power point through SafeAssign.

Course Schedule

Refer to the [academic calendar](#) for important university dates.

The instructor reserves the right to make necessary changes, additions, deletions, and revisions to the course schedule as needed.

Module	Readings	Assignments Due
1 Introduction Film: Metropolis	Reimer, "Weimar Film 1919-1933," p. 1-7 and "Metropolis," p. 27-33	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Screen film: <i>Metropolis</i> Written answers to questions 1,2,3,4,5,7, Reimer p. 33 due by Day 3, 11:59 a.m. ET Initial post due by Day 4, 11:59 a.m. ET and second post due by Day 5, 11:59 a.m. ET
2 The Blue Angel	Reimer, "Weimar Sound Film 1929, p. 45-50 and "The Blue Angel," p. 51-58	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Screen film: <i>The Blue Angel</i> Written answers to questions 1,2,3,4,5, Reimer p. 59 due by Day 1, 11:59 a.m. ET Initial post due by Day 2, 11:59 a.m. ET And second post due by Day 4, 11:59 a.m. ET
3 Triumph of the Will	Reimer, "Nazi Film 1933-1945," p. 69-77 and "Triumph of the Will," p. 79-85	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Screen film: <i>Triumph of the Will</i> Written answers to questions 2,3,4, Reimer p.86 due by Day 1, 11:59 a.m. ET Initial post due by Day 2, 11:59 a.m. And second post due by Day 4, 11:59 a.m. ET
4 The Tin Drum	Reimer, "West German Film 1950-1989," p. 155-164 and "The Tin Drum," p. 205-212	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Screen film: <i>The Tin Drum</i> Written answers to questions 2,4. Reimer p. 212-213 due by Day 1, 11:59 a.m. ET Initial post due by Day 2 11:59 a.m. And second post due by Day 4, 11:59 a.m. ET
5 Wings of Desire	Reimer, "Wings of Desire," p. 233-238 and Vila, Xavier and Alice Kuzniar, "Witnessing Narration in <i>Wings of Desire</i> ," in <i>Film Criticism</i> , Volume 16, Number 3, Spring 1992	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Screen film: <i>Wings of Desire</i> Written answers to questions 1,2 Reimer p. 238-239 and a 1 to 2 paragraph description of the proposed topic for research paper due by Day 1, 11:59 a.m. ET Initial post due by Day 2, 11:59 a.m. ET And second post due by Day 4, 11:59 a.m. ET

Module	Readings	Assignments Due
6 Run Lola Run	Reimer, "German Film After 1989," p. 241-247 and "Run Lola Run," p. 259-266 and Whalen, Tom, "Run Lola Run," in <i>Film Quarterly</i> , Volume 53, Number 3, Spring 2000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screen film: <i>Run Lola Run</i> • Written answers to questions 1,5 Reimer p. 266 due by Day 1, 11:59 a.m. ET • Initial post due by Day 2, 11:59 a.m. ET • And second post due by Day 4, 11:59 a.m. ET • You may submit a draft of your research paper (optional)
7 The Lives of Others And Paper Due	Reimer, "The Lives of Others," p. 305-311 and Bernstein, Matthew H., " <i>The Lives of Others: On a Story of Surveillance, Betrayal, Tragedy, and Redemption</i> ," in <i>Film Quarterly</i> , Volume 61, Number 1, Fall 2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screen film: <i>The Lives of Others</i> • Written answers to questions 1,3,4,5,8 Reimer p. 311 due by Day 1, 11:59 a.m. ET • Initial post due by Day 2 ,11:59 a.m. ET • And second post due by Day 4, 11:59 a.m. ET • Research Paper and Power Point due by Day 7, 11:59 a.m. ET
8 Final Exam Due	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Exam due by the last day of the module, 11:59 a.m. ET

Collaborative Learning

Collaborative learning, through engagement of other students, is a key ingredient of participatory learning. Students can expect each online course to have some degree of collaborative learning. The type of collaboration may be minimal and take the form of weekly small group discussions.

Alternatively, the type of collaboration may be a major virtual team project that requires weekly and substantive participation from all members. Regardless of the type of collaborative learning, all students are expected to participate in a timely, substantive, on-subject, professional, and complete manner.

Hints for Success in Your Online Course

1. Be sure you have access to proper computer equipment, Internet service, and software as listed above.
2. Designate certain times each week to work on your course. Plan ahead, avoid procrastination, even out your workload, and absorb material before moving on.
3. Have a specific achievement goal for each log-on session to help you accomplish what you need to get done and avoid distractions
4. Actively participate in discussions. Meaningful interchange will lead to better understanding of various aspects of the course and also contribute to the personality and warmth of the online class community.

5. If assigned to an online team or study group, work with your team members actively from the start. Thus, team members will benefit from the other group members' ideas and experiences and can depend on one another to complete assigned tasks.
6. Practice an informal but organized, concise, and clear writing style that aids online communication.
7. Venture beyond the classroom. The Internet medium of the online classroom gives ready access to electronic libraries and to pertinent websites that offer a significant advantage in understanding graduate-level material.
8. Your class may occasionally use short multimedia components to enrich the learning environment. Follow the instructions provided.